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Provisional summary record of the 29th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 11 July 2008, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Mérorès ..... (Haiti)
later: Mr. Dapkiunas (Vice-President) ..... (Belarus)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (*continued*)

Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission

1. **The President**, recalling the Council's decision of 20 June 2008, to extend the terms of office of its current members on the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission until 11 July 2008, so as to align them with those of the members elected by the General Assembly, said it was his understanding that, later that afternoon, the General Assembly would decide, as an interim measure, to further extend the terms of office of its current members on the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission until 31 December 2008. He suggested that the Council should also decide, as an interim measure, to further extend the terms of office of its current members on the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission until 31 December 2008. He also suggested that the Council should postpone its consideration of the draft resolution on membership of the Economic and Social Council in the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission (E/2008/L.7) to a later date.

2. *It was so decided.*

3. **The President**, said that the Council would elect by secret ballot one member to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, as outlined in document E/2008/9/Add.14. He had also been advised that the Group of African States had endorsed candidates for the vacant seats on the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Committee for Programme and Coordination. He suggested that the relevant elections should be held the following week.

4. *It was so decided.*

5. *Mr. Dapkiunas (Belarus), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*)

(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*) (E/2008/46, E/2008/49, E/2008/60 and E/2008/83; E/2008/CRP.4)

(b) Reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme (*continued*) (E/2007/35; E/2008/5, E/2008/6 and Corr.1, E/2008/14, E/2008/34(Part I) and Add.1, and E/2008/36; E/2008/L.8)

6. **Mr. Blake** (Observer for Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the outcome of the operational activities segment should enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations system's response to the development needs and priorities of developing countries. To that end, the Council should provide clear and direct guidance for the full implementation of resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

7. The Group of 77 and China attached great importance to resolution 62/208 and its comprehensive, effective and full implementation. The implementation of the resolution should fulfil the vision of a stronger United Nations role in advancing the development agenda and fully realizing the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and seek a broader and more expeditious realization of the global partnership for development. Coherent and coordinated system-wide actions, while necessary for implementation to be effective, must avoid a one size fits all approach. When providing guidance on implementation, the Council should bear in mind that resolution 62/208 also reaffirmed that the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should respond to the development needs of programme countries in a flexible manner and be carried out for the benefit of programme countries, at the request of those countries and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development.

8. In addition to enhancing its implementation efforts, the United Nations system should promote national ownership and leadership of development

processes, enhance coordination with national governments and encourage greater participation of national authorities in the preparation and development of all United Nations system planning and programming documents. For resolution 62/208 to be implemented successfully, fundamental issues relating to the funding of operational activities for development must be addressed. The quantity, quality and predictability of development assistance was a central priority for developing countries and a prerequisite for effective development. Moreover, the growing imbalance between core and non-core resources must be addressed as a matter of urgency, since the shift from core to non-core funding caused fragmentation and might impair the effectiveness and efficiency of operational activities. The 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review should also be implemented strictly within the limits of the intergovernmental mandates contained therein.

9. Welcoming the Secretary-General's comprehensive report on the management process for the implementation of resolution 62/208 (E/2008/49), he drew attention to the Group's comments on the annex to that report. The Group also welcomed the Secretary-General's reports on the comprehensive statistical analysis of the financing of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for 2006 (E/2008/46) and on the functioning of the resident coordinator system, including costs and benefits (E/2008/60) and requested the United Nations system to take into account its views on the implementation of the General Assembly's policy guidance on operational activities.

10. The advancement of the United Nations development agenda depended on the full implementation of resolution 62/208, including through enhancement of the United Nations system's operational capacity to respond more broadly, effectively and efficiently to the needs and priorities of developing countries in support of their efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

11. **Mr. Delacroix** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro; and, in addition, Armenia, Moldova and Norway, said that resolution 62/208 was the continuation of a decades-long effort to improve coordination of United Nations activities for development and thereby better equip the system to respond to programme countries' needs and priorities and assist them in attaining the MDGs and building national capacity.

12. While the European Union recognized that the Secretary-General's report on the management process for the implementation of resolution 62/208 (E/2008/49) was the outcome of wide participation by, and extensive consultations with, the organizations of the United Nations development system and the inter-agency mechanisms, it felt that the management process set out in the report fell short of the resolution's request for clear guidelines, targets, benchmarks and time frames for implementation. The triennial comprehensive policy review was a unique tool that enabled the United Nations to manage and implement its activities for development in a coordinated manner. Any tool that facilitated the review's implementation must, therefore, be conceived in as operational a manner as possible and define the results to be achieved in a format that allowed for adequate monitoring and evaluation. The European Union hoped that the following year's report would meet that requirement.

13. Turning to the Secretary-General's report on the functioning of the resident coordinator system, including costs and benefits (E/2008/60), he welcomed the steps taken to strengthen the resident coordinator's responsibilities vis-à-vis the programme country, on the one hand, and the United Nations system, on the other, and the effort made by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to recruit country directors so as to strengthen the "firewall" between the activities carried out by the resident coordinator on behalf of the system as a whole and the operational activities of UNDP.

14. Such efforts must be pursued if the Organization's capacity to respond effectively to the needs of developing countries was to be strengthened and the resident coordinator system made more open and transparent. In particular, UNDP and the other entities concerned should finalize arrangements for the "firewall" and support the resident coordinator, so that he or she might fully perform his or her duties in helping the United Nations act in a united, effective and coherent manner in support of national strategies; mechanisms that encouraged resident coordinators and

country directors to give priority to achieving the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) goals should be promoted; recruitment should be diversified, training scaled up and awareness of non-resident agencies' activities raised, in order to promote country access to their services and strengthen the resident coordinator's legitimacy; codes of conduct and conflict resolution mechanisms should be established, in order to make country teams accountable and facilitate their work on the ground; results-based management should be consolidated, so as to facilitate evaluation of the implementation of UNDAF; and, lastly, administrative and management practices should be harmonized, so as to reduce transaction costs and generate savings which could then be used to finance development programmes. The European Union looked forward to the submission of the relevant reports.

15. Regarding the Secretary-General's report on the comprehensive statistical analysis of the financing of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for 2006 (E/2008/46), the European Union welcomed the work done by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to improve data collection and the reliability of financial data. For the first time, the report contained detailed data relating to contributions to the specialized agencies. Moreover, steps had been taken to harmonize contributions to the United Nations system. Such efforts should be pursued, particularly in view of the major differences in the way in which the United Nations and the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defined, classified and reported contributions to the United Nations system.

16. **Ms. Marzetti** (United Kingdom), speaking also on behalf of Malawi, Mozambique, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Republic of Tanzania, said that the United Nations was a valuable development partner for both developing and donor countries. The Delivering as One initiative was the most promising effort thus far in terms of ensuring that the United Nations became more than the sum of its parts. A more coherent and effective United Nations that responded to host governments' priorities would be key to meeting the MDGs by 2015. For that reason, Malawi, Mozambique, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United Republic of Tanzania were working together to make the Delivering as One initiative a success. United Nations Headquarters should do its part to ensure that progress was made at the country level in the following areas.

17. First, Delivering as One was not a budget-cutting exercise; United Nations Headquarters should demonstrate how savings on administrative costs led to increased funding for development in the country where the savings were realized. Second, different rules, regulations, planning periods, reporting requirements, procurement systems and other business practices were hampering progress; United Nations Headquarters should rapidly resolve such problems. Third, a harmonized United Nations delivering as one at the country level required an empowered and strengthened resident coordinator; UNDP and other United Nations entities, including the specialized agencies, should rapidly resolve the so-called "firewall" issue. Fourth, no one size fitted all; United Nations Headquarters should allow the necessary innovation by decentralizing decision-making powers. Fifth, the United Nations should, to a much larger extent and wherever possible, align itself with and utilize national budgetary systems for such issues as resource reporting and procurement; United Nations Headquarters should encourage United Nations country teams to capitalize on such opportunities and utilize national execution to the maximum extent possible. Finally, the United Nations could not and should not do everything; priority setting in aligning with Government priorities should be pursued vigorously, complemented by untied, unconditional and predictable donor funding.

18. **Mr. Mérorès** (Haiti) said that the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review had come at an auspicious time for Haiti; his Government hoped that the implementation of resolution 62/208 would significantly improve two aspects of field activities: the programme country's role and national capacity-building. That was all the more important given the fact that the operational segment was being held against the backdrop of strengthening existing instruments, implementing measures adopted at recent meetings and preparing future meetings.

19. National ownership and leadership of development programmes were currently at the heart of operational activities for development. The frequent references to national ownership in both resolution 62/208 and the Secretary-General's report on the management process for its implementation

(E/2008/49) demonstrated the urgent need to revamp the global partnership between the various development cooperation actors. In order for there to be national ownership, however, a State must have the capacity to implement the measures and attain the objectives set out in national development plans and strategies; that meant strong, viable national institutions. In the absence of such capacity, the United Nations should not simply fill the gap by carrying out those tasks itself, but rather design mechanisms and initiatives to help governments build such capacity. Capacity-building was a key component of operational activities for development.

20. His Government had recently completed its growth and poverty reduction strategy paper 2008-2010. An international conference on its implementation and financing would be held in Haiti shortly. The strategy paper was a major step towards the creation of a new style of partnership between the Haitian authorities and the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations. Such a partnership reflected the international community's long-term commitment to Haiti's development.

21. Referring to the report of the joint field visit to Haiti of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) from 1 to 9 March 2008 (DP-FPA/2008/CRP.1-E/ICEF/2008/CRP.11), he said that there was poor coordination among the different United Nations field agencies with respect to management of international aid to Haiti. Furthermore, national capacity-building could hardly be said to be encouraged when over 70 per cent of official development assistance (ODA) to Haiti passed through NGOs on the ground and when United Nations agencies and NGOs themselves regularly poached the few qualified officials in Haiti's civil service.

22. Haiti expected a great deal, therefore, from the new management process for the implementation of resolution 62/208. His Government was particularly pleased that the era of "self-standing" assistance and a one size fits all approach was over. Operational activities for development would be more effective if deployed first and foremost in support of national plans. National ownership and well-designed national capacity-building plans would ensure that global efforts to promote poverty eradication, economic growth and sustainable development produced tangible results for developing countries.

23. **Mr. Ali** (Malaysia) observed that funding was one of the key issues raised in resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development. The report of the Secretary-General on the management process for the implementation of that resolution (E/2008/49) did not adequately reflect strong concern expressed in section II of the resolution over the imbalance between core and non-core resources; nor did the report provide the concise assessment of progress made requested in the resolution (para. 28 (c)). His delegation did not agree with the contention in the report (para. 23) that the United Nations role was limited to advocacy and dialogue with donors. As the Development Cooperation Forum had just illustrated, the United Nations provided the broadest possible forum for discussions between Member States on problems such as the funding imbalance. Another report of the Secretary-General (E/2008/46) giving a comprehensive statistical financial analysis indicated a worrying trend: contributions to the United Nations system in 2006 had declined while those to non-United Nations multilateral bodies had increased substantially. The reasons had to be determined, but his delegation hoped that it was not because of greater donor sway in the multilateral bodies.

24. Regarding the improved functioning of the United Nations development system, some thought needed to be given to the role of the programme countries in evaluating the resident coordinators; and subsequent reports on the functioning of the resident coordinator system should outline some of the obstacles to the redistribution of savings from efficiencies directly into country programmes. The Secretary-General's current report on the subject (E/2008/60) should have more accurately reflected a number of issues raised during the discussions on system-wide coherence, such as establishing a clear separation between an individual's dual roles as Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, or evaluating the success of the delivering as one pilots. Lastly, there had to be some assessment of how the evaluation capacities of the programme countries had been developed (resolution 60/208, para. 139).

25. **Mr. Meñez** (Philippines) observed, from the perspective of a particular country's situation that

while the Philippines was classified as a middle-income developing country, over 80 million of its people still lived below the poverty line. The underlying causes of that poverty had been assessed, and the Government, as it sought to improve the lives of its citizens with United Nations assistance, had closely linked its medium-term development plan to United Nations goals and objectives.

26. However, UNDP programme expenditure for 2007 indicated that implementation in the field did not always measure up to the targets: in the Philippines, less than 80 per cent of the programme resource delivery target had been met and, at the same time, there had been a precipitous 75 per cent drop in non-core resource mobilization.

27. It should be borne in mind that the effects of globalization and interdependence applied also to the concerns of the Council. If there was still such a need for ODA, it was because, both nationally and internationally, there was an imbalance between policy and reality. The equitable functioning of free trade, which was to have been the engine for growth and development, had been stymied by the lack of progress on the Doha Round of negotiations, forcing countries to resort to bilateral, multilateral or regional arrangements that usually covered only certain areas of commerce and were not uniform. The Council's most vigorous efforts to carry out the sustainable development agenda needed to be matched by agreement in other global arenas on issues like trade, security or the environment.

28. **Mr. Petranto** (Indonesia) observed that resolution 62/208, which offered the guiding policy framework for United Nations operational activities for development, highlighted the need for effective delivery of assistance that made a clear impact on the capacity of the programme countries to pursue poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development. The key to success was to ensure adequate, predictable financial resources that would further the development plans and programmes of the countries themselves, and it was therefore urgent to redress the imbalance between core and non-core funding.

29. The formidable global challenges in respect of food security and climate change were only additional hurdles for the developing countries as they endeavoured to meet internationally agreed development targets, including the MDGs. The operational activities of the United Nations system should be conducted in a time frame consistent with the time frame set for achieving the goals, and time frames should also be a component in the process of evaluating operational activities.

30. Effective operational activities should not restrict the ability of governments to determine their own priorities, select their own development partners or decide the nature of the relationship they wanted to have with United Nations development agencies. The annual reports on the resident coordinator system should regularly assess key factors such as coherence, participatory aspects and accountability.

31. Regarding the United Nations system contribution to national capacity development and development effectiveness, there had been progress especially in the areas of capacity-building, South-South cooperation, the transition from relief to development and gender equality and the empowerment of women. It would, however, have been interesting to have more information about the role the United Nations had played in South-South cooperation.

32. **Mr. Savostyanov** (Russian Federation) said that the operational development activities of the United Nations represented the international community's joint contribution to raising living standards in developing countries. Their success depended on scrupulous adherence to the applicable principles, to the fundamental decisions of the Member States and to a rational division of labour among the various components of the United Nations development apparatus. The Council played an essential role by coordinating and translating the decisions of the General Assembly into action by the funds and programmes on the ground. His delegation assured the Council that it would uphold the principles of universality, neutrality, multilateralism and non-politicization. However, national governments should retain the prerogative of choosing the parameters and priorities for collaboration with the United Nations system.

33. The organizations of the United Nations system and the Member States should fully and meticulously implement the General Assembly resolutions on the triennial comprehensive policy review, which provided a framework to direct and maintain the momentum of the reform and refinement of the mechanism.

Welcoming the contribution to transparency and accountability made by the first ever report of the Secretary-General on the functioning of the resident coordinator system (E/2008/60), his delegation hoped that its submission would become an annual exercise, and that it would be made more detailed and analytical. His delegation also recalled the emphasis in General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the need for resident coordinators to operate within a collegial country team.

34. The Russian Federation had played a part in overseeing the activities of the operational agencies concerned, and had been a beneficiary of their action. Its robust economic growth had enabled it to progress beyond the stage of entitlement to those agencies' assistance; when the current country programmes came to an end, it would be exclusively a donor.

35. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (People's Republic of China) said that the implementation of the goals set out in the triennial comprehensive policy review required a clear division of labour between all parts of the United Nations development system, and clearly defined responsibilities, so that Member States could assess progress and obstacles and provide timely policy guidance.

36. Resources had a fundamental bearing on the operation of the development system but the proportion of core resources had recently been declining annually. Programmes and funds consequently had to focus energy on competing for non-core resource contributions by satisfying donor requirements; that militated against the multilateralism, neutrality and grant nature of relief activities and undercut the monitoring and managerial functions of the governing bodies. Both the United Nations system and the donor community should move expeditiously to reverse that trend.

37. The United Nations should tailor its assistance to the needs and strategies of the developing countries, emphasize flexibility and avoid imposing a standard model. The resident coordinators should foster the principle of national ownership and follow the leadership of recipient governments in establishing more efficient country teams.

38. The lengthy process of building the capacity of developing countries was the core of development, and it must be regarded as a priority. Recipient governments should be allowed a greater coordinating role in the formulation of the UNDAF; the national execution model should be more widely disseminated; and greater use should be made of experts and expertise from the recipient countries. In addition, South-South cooperation held huge potential, which the United Nations development system should exploit by opening more funding channels, promoting it in innovative ways and providing greater backstopping.

39. **Mr. Chave** (Observer for Switzerland) said that the triennial comprehensive policy review had broken new ground in a number of areas: it emphasized United Nations help in building the capacity of partner governments and their institutions to implement their own development agendas; it redefined the accountability of the United Nations system vis-à-vis both the recipient countries and its own governance; it stressed the fundamental importance of core resources; it recognized the centrality of achieving programmatic coherence at the country level; it defined the role of the United Nations operational system in the context of current and new aid modalities; it unambiguously enhanced the contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment; and it advanced the agenda for cost-reduction and efficient delivery.

40. It was particularly encouraging that an orderly and well-functioning institutional architecture had been established, with the respective roles of the General Assembly, the Council and the various governing bodies of the United Nations system agencies clearly defined. The Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), having included the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) into its own structure as a third pillar, had focused on ways of implementing the triennial comprehensive policy review, thus demonstrating its respect for General Assembly guidance.

41. With regard to funding for operational activities, Switzerland was disappointed that the Secretary-General seemed to interpret his own role as mere advocacy and dialogue with donors. Indeed, the Secretary-General ought to launch an initiative in support of core funding at the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus to be held in Doha in the fall. Participation in such an initiative would of course be voluntary, based on peer pressure and public scrutiny, and on convincing results achieved by the United Nations system.

42. It was, in addition, crucial to endow the operational activities for development with a comprehensive, sustainable and consistent financial data and reporting system, as urged in paragraph 28 (a) and (b) of resolution 60/208, for such a system was needed for meaningful intergovernmental deliberation on funding. It was also of capital importance to move steadily towards harmonized business practices, one of the most practical ways of reducing the cost of development assistance and the enormous wastage involved in a non-unified database system.

43. **Mr. López** (Cuba) observed that cooperation for development should be provided at the request of the developing countries, on the basis of their national plans and strategies and should respond to their needs, priorities and specific conditions, without additional conditionalities. The overall policy guidance for United Nations operational activities was set out in resolution 62/208, which called for improved functioning of the United Nations development system, results-based management, and operational activities that were valued and assessed on the basis of their impact on the programme countries.

44. One should proceed with caution in establishing any link between the normative and operational work of the United Nations. United Nations norms were the result of an intergovernmental process and were applied universally, whereas the operational activities took place only in the developing countries. Under no circumstances did the United Nations system have a mandate to monitor universally applicable issues in the countries of the South, for that would introduce further conditionalities into the already weakened United Nations agenda for development, discount national priorities and allow donors to become instruments of political pressure on the beneficiary countries.

45. There was no one size fits all approach, and the governments themselves should determine the approach they wanted. The various agencies of the United Nations system should strive for greater coordination and coherence, to avoid duplication and maximize effectiveness and an efficient use of resources. At the same time, each individual body should retain its own identity, for there was no single model for system-wide coherence either. No one agency could claim all credit for the advances made in cooperation with the developing countries, or claim that its representatives were in a position to decide what the countries' priorities should be or, worse still, had the authority to mediate in the internal affairs of the developing countries. That would encourage donors to take an interventionist approach and significantly diminish the core resources for the international development agenda.

46. The urgent development challenges in the world were simply the reflection of the unjust international economic and political order that had become entrenched after decades of neo-liberalism. The rich countries, the obvious beneficiaries of the current system, must maintain their commitments and abandon policies that stood in the way of genuine cooperation with the United Nations system.

47. **Ms. Lisson** (Observer for Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand (CANZ), expressed strong support for the operational activities of the United Nations development system. The CANZ delegations saw the triennial comprehensive policy review as critical in delivering a system that produced real, measurable and measured results in achieving country-owned and country-led development objectives. The report of the Secretary-General on the management process for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 (E/2008/49) provided a good starting point for implementing the triennial comprehensive policy review, such implementation being crucial for the effective coordination of efforts within the United Nations and the provision of efficient support for the achievement of the MDGs.

48. In order to optimize the effectiveness of the Council's monitoring of the implementation of the triennial comprehensive policy review and its provision of concrete guidance to the development system through its substantive sessions, the management plan also needed to be able to identify expected results and fine-tune targets, benchmarks, time frames and performance measurements since "what got measured, got done". The lack of a concrete and measurable results framework in the management process for the 2004 triennial comprehensive policy review had been a major shortcoming and one of the reasons why the resolution was not fully implemented. More quantitative analysis should be included in the implementation update for the Council's 2009 session, since the use of results-based management needed to be expanded in all operational activities. Full implementation of the triennial comprehensive policy review would be a key step in building on the growing momentum towards better system-wide coherence.

49. **Ms. Kharashun** (Belarus) said that her delegation supported the principle of national ownership and leadership of the development process, reaffirmed in the reports of the Secretary-General on the management process for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 (E/2008/49) and on the functioning of the resident coordinator system (E/2008/60). Similarly, the triennial comprehensive policy review confirmed that only governments should determine priorities for development cooperation activities with the United Nations system.

50. Contrary to the proposals of some States, resident coordinators should not play any kind of political role within a country, but rather focus on consolidating the efforts of the various United Nations system organizations and donors to attract resources to implement projects selected and approved by that country's government. The resident coordinator should not be given additional responsibilities, for example, the task of assessing the human rights situation or acting as an intermediary between political and social groups, as such efforts would detract from his or her assistance coordination duties and risk paralysing the local activities of United Nations system organizations.

51. In connection with the Delivering as One initiative, she recalled that the resident coordinator system was owned by the United Nations development system as a whole, and that its functioning should be participatory, collegial and accountable. The resident coordinators could not act effectively at country level unless appropriate coordination also took place at the intermediate and upper levels of management. As most of the countries involved in the Delivering as One pilots had noted, the current arrangements, consisting of the UNDG and CEB, were inadequate. Coordination and transparency could be improved by unifying financial frameworks, decision-making processes and methods of evaluation. The task of increasing the effectiveness of United Nations assistance was complicated by the fact that greater cooperation implied handing over some functions to the coordinating entity, raising the prospect of United Nations agencies becoming more uniform and therefore less specialized.

52. It would be unwise for the number of pilot countries to be increased or for reorganization of headquarters structures to be contemplated until a comprehensive analysis of the long-term outcomes of existing projects had taken place. Only with such a long-term view would it be possible to evaluate the operation of the country teams and thematic groups, the function of the resident coordinator and central coordination mechanisms. Finally, more accountability should be placed on the specialized agencies for the collection and supply of statistics regarding the funding of their operational activities.

53. **Mr. Mori** (Japan) said that his delegation hoped the United Nations system would be fully flexible, both at Headquarters and in the field, to meet the demands of people in need while keeping in mind current development modalities. To that end, Japan urged the Council to further encourage the wider Organization to take practical steps to accomplish its tasks, setting clear benchmarks and targets in accordance with General Assembly resolution 62/208. The urgency was particularly great given the emerging food and energy crises.

54. The resident coordinator system had a key role to play in improving the functioning of the United Nations development system. Given the disagreements evident in various forums on issues such as the evaluation process for the resident coordinator system and the capacity of those officials, his delegation would like the General Assembly, the Council and other relevant bodies to take immediate and concrete actions, with clear timelines, so that the wider Organization could improve its delivery of assistance on the ground.

55. **Mr. Tarragô** (Brazil) said his delegation firmly believed that rural development could be attained in developing countries. National comparative advantages should be fully explored to that end, enabling developing countries to achieve increased food and biofuel production consistent with food and energy security.

56. Referring to General Assembly resolution 62/208, he said that by outlining principles, actions, objectives and timelines for implementation of the resolution, the matrix management process constituted a road map for the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes in their strategies to implement and monitor the triennial comprehensive policy review. It should therefore serve as the main reference for the reports of the Secretary-General in 2009 and 2010. It was, however, also important for developing countries to participate in evaluating the effectiveness of the triennial comprehensive policy review. Moreover, for

effective implementation of resolution 62/208, all United Nations specialized agencies, not just those of UNDG, needed to put into practice the guidance established.

57. Turning to the report of the Secretary-General on the functioning of the resident coordinator system, including costs and benefits (E/2008/60), he welcomed the suggestions put forward but considered that future reports should emphasize the need for the specialized agencies to engage in discussions with local governments and resident coordinators. The workplan for the resident coordinator system should include institutional strengthening at the local level to achieve better coordination in the respective countries, and coordination should not be one-sided but should allow recipient countries to voice their priorities and views regarding the role of the United Nations agencies, programmes and funds. The resident coordinator system should also monitor the local implementation of decisions by the General Assembly, the Council and the Secretary-General, seek to share common premises with other United Nations agencies and explore the potential of local in-kind contributions. If provided with the appropriate normative background and operational support, the resident coordinator system could become one of the leading actors in the United Nations reform process, particularly in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment.

58. **Mr. Sul** Kyung-hoon (Republic of Korea) said that the role of the funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations development system was more important than ever in the light of current challenges and, against that backdrop, the operational activities segment provided a valuable opportunity for follow-up on the policy recommendations of the General Assembly.

59. Referring to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208, he welcomed the efforts already made to incorporate the principle of national ownership and leadership into United Nations operational activities and encouraged the United Nations development organizations to further consolidate that process by fully aligning their operational activities with national development plans and utilizing national systems. The United Nations development system should also further improve its machinery in order to better respond to the needs of programme countries, while business practices should be simplified and harmonized at headquarters level. A well-functioning resident coordinator system would be a key element in the success of "Delivering as One" and, to that end, the system should be managed in a participatory and accountable way.

60. Noting that core resources were the bedrock of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, he called on Member States to make every effort to increase the share of core resources in total funding. Since the current imbalance was due to more rapid growth of non-core contributions than core contributions, it was important first to analyse the reason for that discrepancy. He also welcomed the increase in contributions from non-Development-Assistance Committee sources for United Nations operational activities.

61. Lastly, the link between the normative and operational work of the United Nations still needed to be further strengthened, and the Council was ideally positioned to function as a bridge between those two areas.

62. **Mr. Lezona** (Congo), while welcoming the coherence of the guidance and recommendations given in the report of the Secretary-General on the management process for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208, said that strict implementation would be required if the expected results were to be obtained, particularly since the achievement of the MDGs was looking more and more uncertain. Noting that the situation had been made worse by the decline in ODA, he called on development partners to honour their commitments in that regard.

63. While his delegation appreciated the support provided by the United Nations system for development initiatives, he wished to stress that it was important to tailor development assistance to the needs and priorities of the programme countries and to strengthen the coordination of development cooperation efforts. He particularly welcomed the new 2009-2013 cooperation programme between the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Congo, designed to assist the Congolese Government to achieve the MDGs, inter alia, through the implementation of its national poverty reduction strategy, and to guarantee children's rights to survival. In that connection, the Government, having adopted the Plan of Action for "A World Fit for Children", had

taken important practical steps to improve its policies and programmes for children. National capacity-building was also one of the key aims of the cooperation between the Congo and UNDP.

64. He urged the United Nations to continue exploring the opportunities for South-South cooperation, which was of great importance to the Congo in terms of its economic policies and investment priorities. His delegation also fully supported the principle that the transition from relief to development should be undertaken under national ownership. That had been the approach taken by the Congolese national authorities with regard to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants from 2001 onwards.

65. **Mr. Leuca** (Republic of Moldova) said that the Council's review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 provided a key opportunity to examine ways to strengthen the links between the normative work of the United Nations system and its operational activities, make further progress in overcoming systemic fragmentation and build on continuing reforms. The Republic of Moldova supported initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations development system and considered that, in order to strengthen its capacity to assist countries in achieving their development goals, its efficiency, coherence and impact must be further bolstered and its resources increased.

66. His delegation agreed that operational activities should be based on the national priorities, needs and requirements articulated in national frameworks and should promote the national ownership of development programmes. Capacity-building was vital as part of that process.

67. In the Republic of Moldova, the operational efficiency of individual funds, programmes and specialized agencies had been increased, and significant progress achieved in strengthening coordination and coherence. The first joint annual review of the synchronized UNDAF programme cycle showed that it was contributing to the achievement of the country's national development priorities. The United Nations system in the Republic of Moldova would, however, continue to promote greater simplification and harmonization between the Government and donors to reduce transaction costs, build national capacities, align donor activities with national priorities and improve results.

68. Adequate funding for operational activities remained essential; in that regard, the predictability and quality of funding, multi-year pledging, focus on core contributions and burden-sharing should be guiding principles. Lastly, his delegation believed that the resident coordinator system was a fundamental tool for ensuring country-level coherence and that greater power should be given to the resident coordinator to set strategic priorities and ensure the accountability of all participating agencies. The resident coordinator's role in ensuring the effective delivery of services in support of national priorities should also be further strengthened.

69. **Ms. Alzhanova** (Kazakhstan), recalling the recent visit of the Executive Board of UNDP to Kazakhstan in connection with its country programme outline, said that collaboration between the Government and United Nations agencies had resulted in much progress, despite problems, such as uneven levels of development, which also afflicted other countries. As the Administrator of UNDP had indicated to the Council, many opportunities to improve the effectiveness of United Nations system activities remained to be explored and exploited.

70. In her delegation's view, harmonization of programmes was best achieved through the resident coordinator system and UNDAFs. However, as relatively new mechanisms, they had experienced some delays, and doubts remained, chiefly about evaluation. Some Frameworks were fragmented, and should be aligned more closely with the priority needs of the country to which they applied. As government ministries sometimes complained that they had little idea of the expectations of United Nations agencies, thought might be given to arranging reciprocal traineeships for national civil servants and United Nations agency staff in order to promote greater understanding.

71. More attention should also be paid to assessing the risks involved in implementing the Frameworks, and to making appropriate adjustments. Perhaps, in the establishment of each Framework, fallback solutions should be contemplated to accommodate unforeseen circumstances. Clearly, no one-size-fits-all benchmarks of progress existed, but some standardization of benchmarks would be useful. One possibility was to

determine for each country a vulnerability coefficient, taking account of dependence on aid, market access, physical isolation or the effects of natural disasters. Such factors influenced States' abilities to achieve development goals.

72. The resident coordinator system, meanwhile, was not operating to its full potential. Instead of the current heavy dependence on UNDP, particularly for salaries, the United Nations agencies involved in development could contribute to a central fund to finance the resident coordinator post and coordination functions. Further decentralization would also remove the obstacles created by the present hierarchical system, which left resident coordinators unable to make decisions without referring to regional or central managers. The resulting saving in time would also represent a financial saving. Drawing on the experience of business, expenditure should be measured to compare the cost of equivalent activities in different locations and to avoid waste. The organizations of the United Nations system should also examine personnel costs to determine whether levels of staffing were appropriate to the scale of the programmes being implemented and whether there was potential for outsourcing.

73. **Mr. Heidt** (United States of America) said that the goal of the Member States should be to work with the organizations of the United Nations system to implement resolution 62/208 and improve programme delivery. The resident coordinator system played an essential role in implementation at the country level. Referring to the report of the Secretary-General on the functioning of the resident coordinator system (E/2008/60), he recalled resident coordinators' accountability to host governments through their reports to the national authorities on the results achieved by the United Nations country team, and their accountability to the governing bodies of United Nations agencies and to the Member States through UNDAF, the annual United Nations country team workplan and the country team performance appraisal system.

74. Because of their importance, the accountability mechanisms should be carefully adhered to and continuously monitored and improved. Perhaps the Secretary-General should supply the Council with a summary of the annual reports from resident coordinators to review and discuss each year. The summary should include information on the host countries' assessments of the country teams' activities and an assessment of the programme results and performance of each United Nations agency, based on the parameters contained in General Assembly resolution 62/208.

75. Another important objective of the resident coordinator system was to save costs. The scale of cost saving should increase as the scale of sharing of premises and services increased, enabling more resources to be ploughed back into national programmes. A cost and savings analysis should be included in reports to the Council. While a number of United Nations agencies, including the World Food Programme, had increased their participation in the resident coordinator system, UNDP remained the system's sole source of funding, which consumed 28 per cent of the core resources allocated to each country.

76. His delegation would like information on possible savings and cost-sharing with other participating agencies, whose involvement in the system made it more attuned to the range of needs of the programme countries and helped simplification and harmonization within the United Nations development structure. It looked forward to discussing the information provided for the Council in the conference room paper on actions taken by the executive boards and governing bodies of the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies in the area of simplification and harmonization of the United Nations development system (E/2008/CRP.4).

77. **Mr. Rengifo** (Observer for Colombia), recalling that the 2005 World Summit Outcome had described the purpose of operational activities for development as being to help to eradicate poverty and promote sustained economic growth and sustainable development, within the context of the MDGs, said that the triennial comprehensive policy review provided the framework for improving United Nations system assistance to Member States, and for implementing their national development priorities and strategies.

78. The current session of the Council should establish guidelines for the policies established by the General Assembly in its recent resolution 62/208. In that connection, the report of the Secretary-General on the management process for the implementation of the resolution (E/2008/49) provided a useful point of departure, with practical recommendations to ensure

progress and provide for monitoring and evaluation of results.

79. Bearing in mind the ongoing development of that management process, his delegation urged improvement of national ownership, which was vital to the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of development. Although the resolution had already recognized governments' leadership role in connection with requesting and coordinating development cooperation in specific fields, with identifying development priorities and with preparing programme frameworks, clear guidelines, parameters and measures should apply to the strengthening of coordination between the United Nations system and national Governments, particularly with respect to the transition from relief to development.

80. The United Nations was a driving force behind South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation, especially under the leadership of the UNDP Special Unit for South-South Cooperation. However, steps should be taken to ensure that the Special Unit had the resources to implement its mandate in accordance with paragraph 53 of the resolution. While the annex to the report made reference to that consideration, it failed to suggest specific action. Specific action should also be established to support the development efforts of middle-income countries. Once again, while the annex to the report referred to that matter, it contained no practical recommendations, leaving it out of step with the requirements of paragraph 27 of the resolution.

81. **Mr. Benfreha** (Algeria) said that it must not be forgotten that the 2005 World Summit Outcome had enshrined development as one of the pillars of the United Nations system. Starting from its position of comparative advantage, the United Nations system could build the capacity of developing countries to achieve their priority goals, and therefore to implement their own national policies and the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. Developing countries needed United Nations assistance to cope with development challenges and achieve lasting growth, primarily by reinforcing national development authorities. To optimize United Nations development activities, developing countries should have the best possible access to the opportunities available in the United Nations system.

82. The funds, programmes and specialized agencies should ensure full implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208. Much had already been achieved, but more effort was needed. Operational activities for development should be based on national priorities themselves derived from national development strategies and plans. National ownership should be promoted by involving local entities in the implementation of development projects and programmes. The resident coordinator system had made progress, but United Nations bodies should improve their cooperation to coordinate their activities better, and should submit regular analytical reports.

83. The downward trend in the resources of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies should be examined to try to achieve a level of financing which was commensurate with the mandates of the bodies of the United Nations system and also predictable and compatible with the requirement that operational activities for development should be universal and neutral. His delegation supported raising the profile of South-South cooperation, which should become an integral part of the activities concerned. Support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development should also be improved by increasing its integration with other programmes in the United Nations system.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.